

# Bellingham Public Library



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees  
Tuesday, September 17, 2019 – Central Library Lecture Room  
3:30 p.m.**

Minutes of Actions and Decisions of the Library Board of Trustees of the Bellingham Public Library as authorized by RCW 27.12.210 and SEC. 7.02 Charter of the City of Bellingham.

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**Board Members Present:** Rachel Myers, Rebecca Craven, and Jim McCabe

**Board Members Absent:** Rick Osen, Vernon Johnson

**Library Staff:** Rebecca Judd, Bethany Hoglund, Janice Keller, Jon McConnel, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Wendy Jenkins

**Others Present:** Chris Johnsen, Friends of BPL; Candace Johnson, citizen

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**Call to order and introductions:** Regular session was called to order at 3:35 p.m. by Vice-Chair, Rachel Myers.

**Approve/modify agenda:** It was noted that the date for the minutes and reports listed under consent agenda are incorrectly dated July. The Board will be approving the August 20 minutes and the August performance and financial reports. Jim McCabe moved to approve the agenda. Rebecca Craven seconded. Motion carried.

**Public comment:** No comment.

**Consent agenda:** Rebecca Craven moved to approve the August 20, 2019 Regular meeting minutes and the August 2019 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Jim McCabe seconded. Motion carried.

**Board member reports:** No report.

**City Council liaison report:** No report.

**Friends of BPL report:** Chris Johnsen reported that the Friends are going to focus on increasing membership, starting in January. Currently there are 159 members. The Fall Book Sale is next week – September 25-28. Rachel asked if there are ways the Board can support the Friends in their membership drive. Chris answered that she will be working with Janice on signage and advertising, and she also invited everyone to join the Friends themselves.

**Library Director report:** Rebecca Judd congratulated Bethany on being selected as one of Bellingham Business Journal's *7 under 40 Whatcom Young Professionals Awards*. Rachel, a member of the BBJ selection committee, added her congratulations.

Last month Rebecca Judd reported on changes publishers are making to eBook purchasing by libraries. She updated that there has been a lot of national attention and the American Library Association (ALA) has circulated an online petition denouncing the changes. She is talking with the City to determine what is appropriate to share with our patrons. Rebecca Craven has looked at this online petition and reported that an email address is requested – before signing the petition she would like to know what ALA intends to do with the addresses.

Rebecca Judd and Jon will be attending a digital symposium in Wenatchee, *Beyond our Doors: Connecting for a Broader Future*, presented by the State Library. They will report on the symposium next month.

The Whatcom Literacy Council (WLC) is hosting their annual Literacy Breakfast Fundraiser with Nancy Pearl on November 7 and Rebecca invited the Trustees to attend.

**Fines update:** Rebecca Judd reported that a budget modification proposal was turned into the Mayor requesting the elimination of overdue fines in 2020. The Mayor will be reviewing all proposals in September and making a recommendation to City Council in October. The Library will have a work session with Council in October. Jon and Carmi, Jon's counterpart from WCLS, are working on developing outcome measures for the fines free project – how and what we will measure over the year. Rebecca reported we are also working with the City (Legal and Finance) about eliminating standing overdue fines. Janice and Mary Vermillion, from WCLS, are developing a communications plan. Procedures are being finalized and policies are being updated.

**Policy review – Library Accounts Receivable:** Jennifer Vander Ploeg reported that in the process of determining meaningful numbers for the fines free project, it became apparent that we needed to update the Library Accounts Receivable policy. Jennifer aimed for a concise draft, included in the packet, that shows the process we go through for handling accounts receivable and how we determine when a receivable is no longer collectible. The Board will be asked to approve the policy next month.

**Strategic Plan update:** Janice Keller distributed copies of the [Community Conversations Report](#). The Strategic Plan Committee met and decided that the October 8 Special Meeting will be focused on a conceptual conversation to talk through the Strategic Plan Background Reading questions:

- What themes do you find interesting or compelling?
- What information is important for the library to consider as we form our strategic directions?
- What community needs are identified that the library can help address?
- What information raises further questions or need for additional research?

The Committee will take this information and craft strategic directions to propose to the Board at the Regular Meeting on October 22.

**Library usage trends:** Jennifer presented a PowerPoint on usage trends, illustrating the patterns in statistics that we measure. It featured collection make-up, checkout activity, location use, computer use, programs and staffing levels. *(See Attachment #1 for 2009 – 2018 A decade of statistics. All attachments are located at the end of the minutes).*

**Facilities Committee update:** Rebecca Judd reviewed that this \$1.6 million Central Library main floor project is funded in the 2019-2020 biennium budget. The goal is to improve patron experience by opening space, adding restrooms and meeting space, as well as improving efficiency. The Committee, the management team, and James Simpson, Facilities Project Manager, have all been working with RMC Architects on the conceptual design – big picture decisions. Using a blueprint, Rebecca pointed out:

- West side of building work area: the garage will be a staging area for all deliveries; the automated materials handler (AMH) will be north of the garage; staff workspace will be north of the AMH
- Open seating along the north wall to take advantage of the light from the windows
- Moving patron computers to opened-up central area
- Open walkway from doors to fiction stacks
- 2 individual restrooms
- Larger holds pick-up area
- 2 small study rooms
- Teens area relocated to current periodicals area
- New carpet, new paint

There are 4 public information sessions scheduled (listed in packet). Janice added that there is an interior remodel page on our website for up-to-date information.

**Summer Reading round-up:** Bethany reported that Summer Reading was a smashing success. She thanked the Friends of BPL for their significant support of this program, both financial and supplying over 2000 gently used books for finishers. Bethany also thanked all staff for their hard work and enthusiasm. There were 1803 Youth finishers; 232 Teen finishers (nearly 100 more than last year); and 239 Adult finishers (also 100 more than last year). Janice added that we are almost in lockstep with WCLS with Summer Reading which allows a patron to walk into any library in Whatcom County and have a similar experience and get the same message. This is a model for future projects with WCLS.

**New Business:**

- Rachel noted that a reappointment for Rick Osen, for a second term, is in process.

**Action items for next meeting:**

- Strategic Plan Background Reading for October 8 Special Meeting
- Library Accounts Receivable policy approval

**Meeting adjourned** at 4:51 p.m.

**Next Special Library Board Meeting – October 8, 2019** at the Central Library, 210 Central Avenue, Library Board Room – at 3:30 p.m.

**Next Regular Library Board Meeting – October 22, 2019** at the Central Library, 210 Central Avenue, Library Lecture Room – at 3:30 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

**Attachments:**

- 2009 – 2018 A decade of statistics



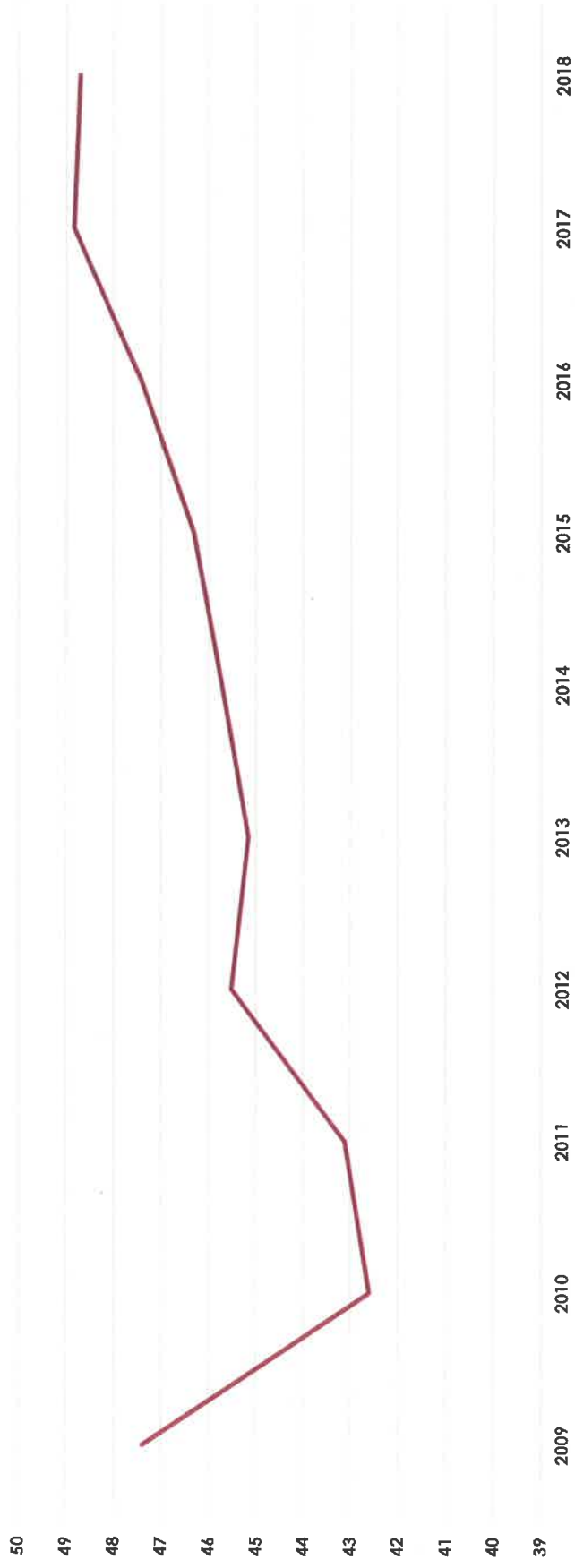
# Bellingham Public Library

**2009 – 2018**

**A decade of statistics**

Staffing Levels 2009-2018

FTEs



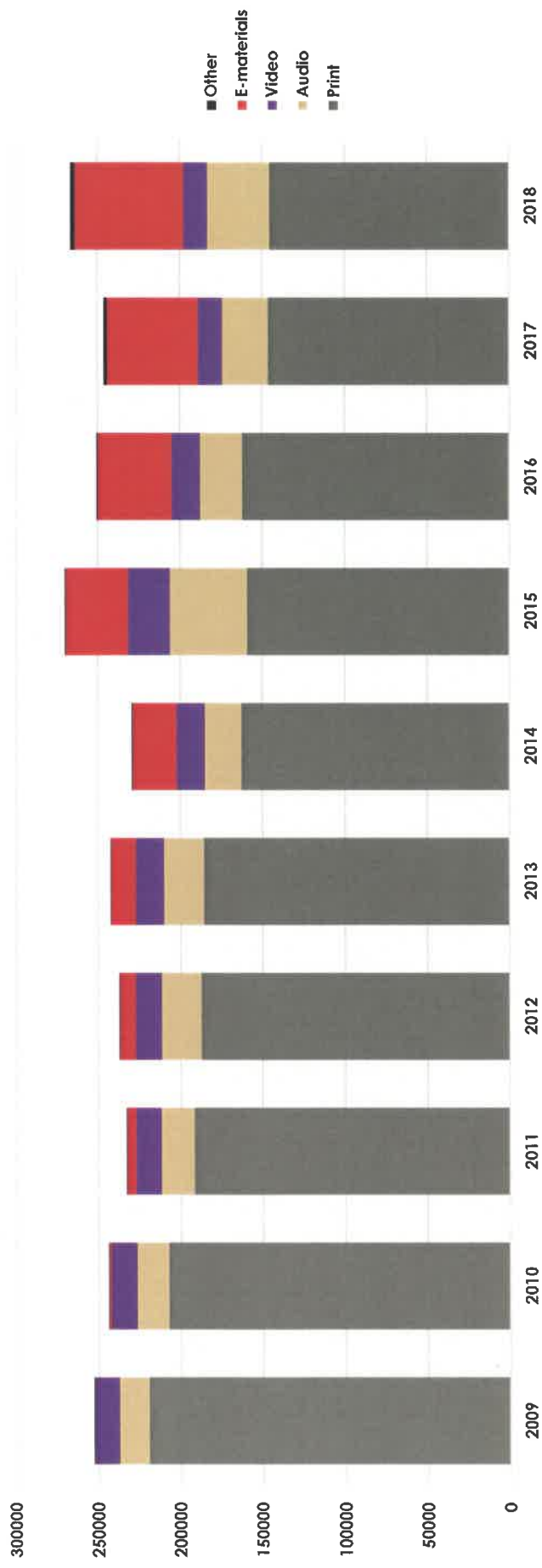
- The recession impacted the library and staffing levels took a hit in 2010, which we have been slowly recovering from.
- During this recovery, we are being intentional in our plans for future staffing using the levels of service adopted by the Board of Trustees.

Materials expenditures 2009-2018



- Our materials budget has been slowly improving after the recession, and more quickly since adopting the levels of service
- Demands on the materials budget continue to grow as more formats are available and expected to be in our collection

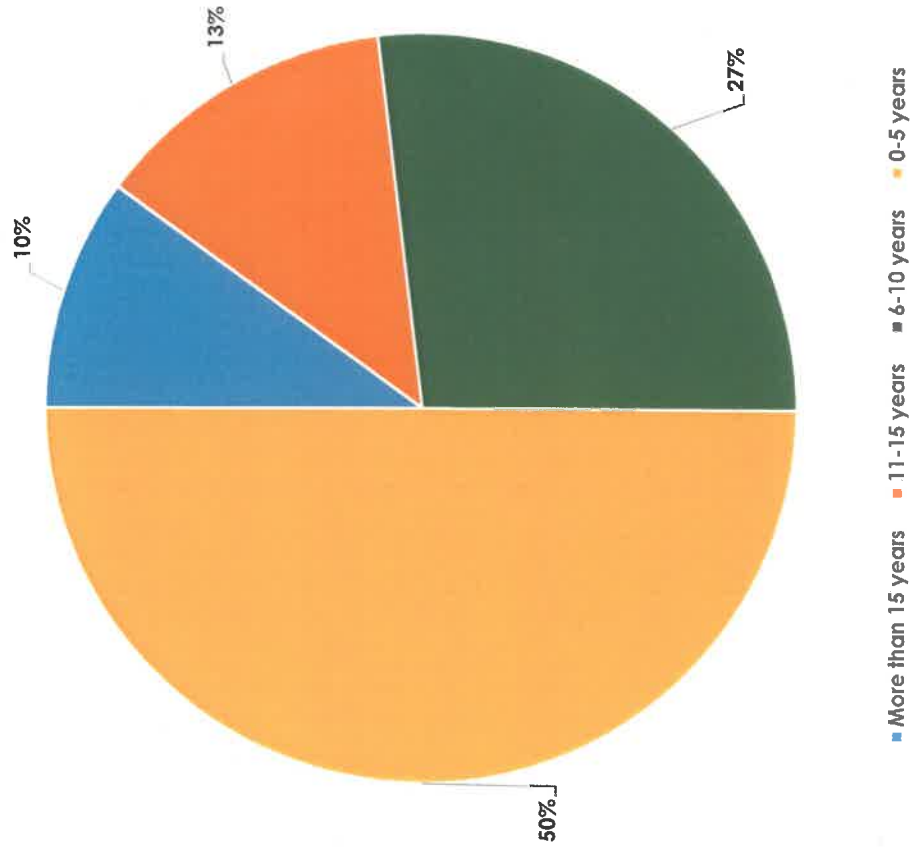
Library materials composition 2009-2018



- Print material holdings have been decreasing incrementally over time
- This decline may be partly due to the expectation that we will hold the same title in several formats

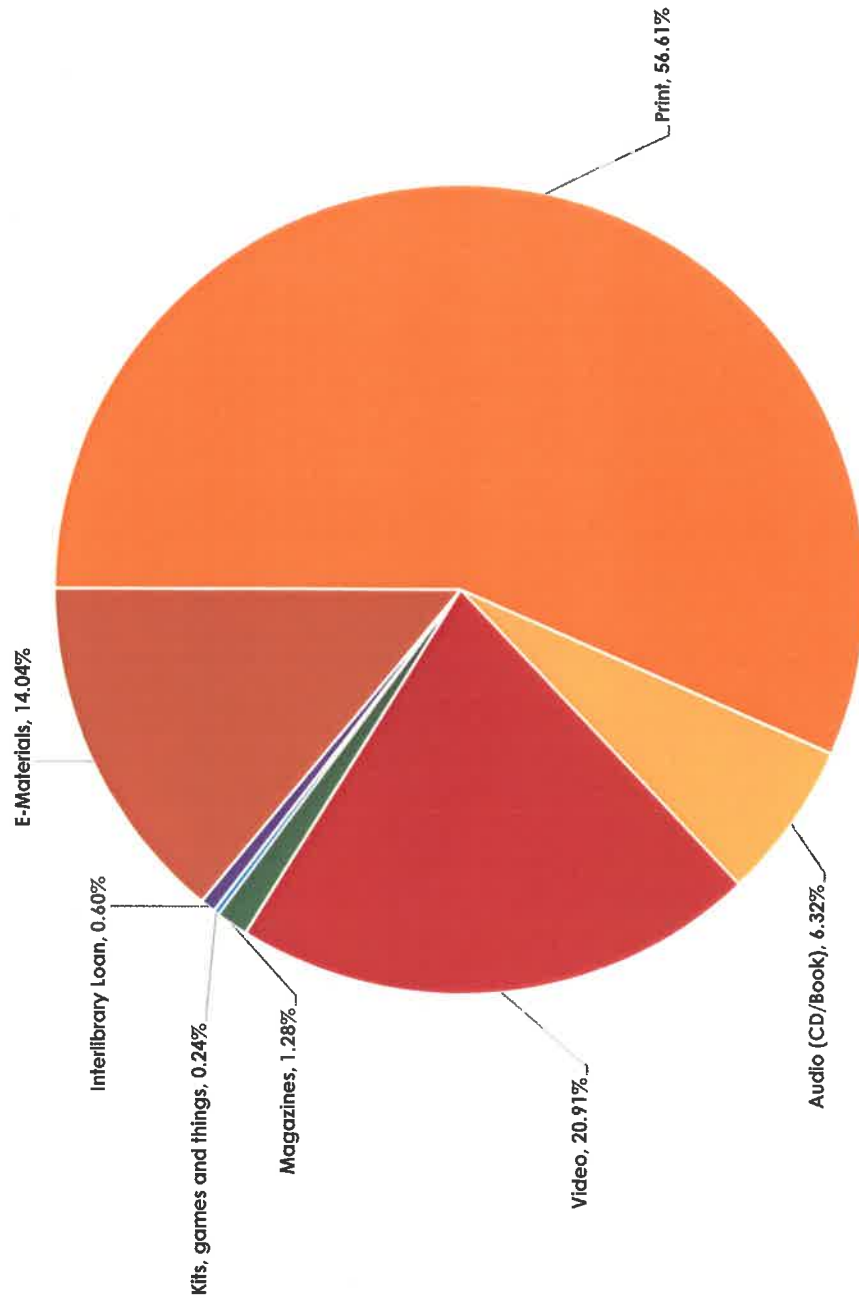


## Age of our Physical Materials 2018



- 4 years ago around 17% of materials were over 15 years old.
- 4 years ago our new materials (0-5 years) were around 38%

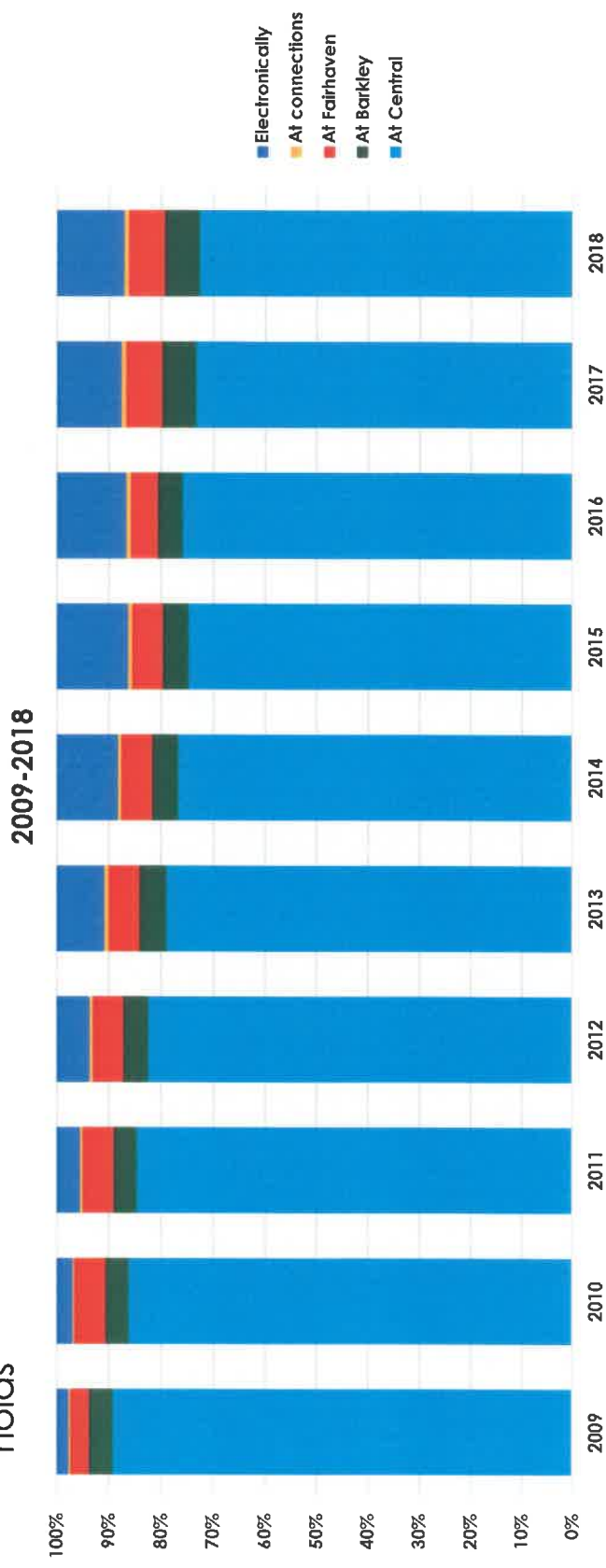
### Type of Materials Checked Out in 2018?

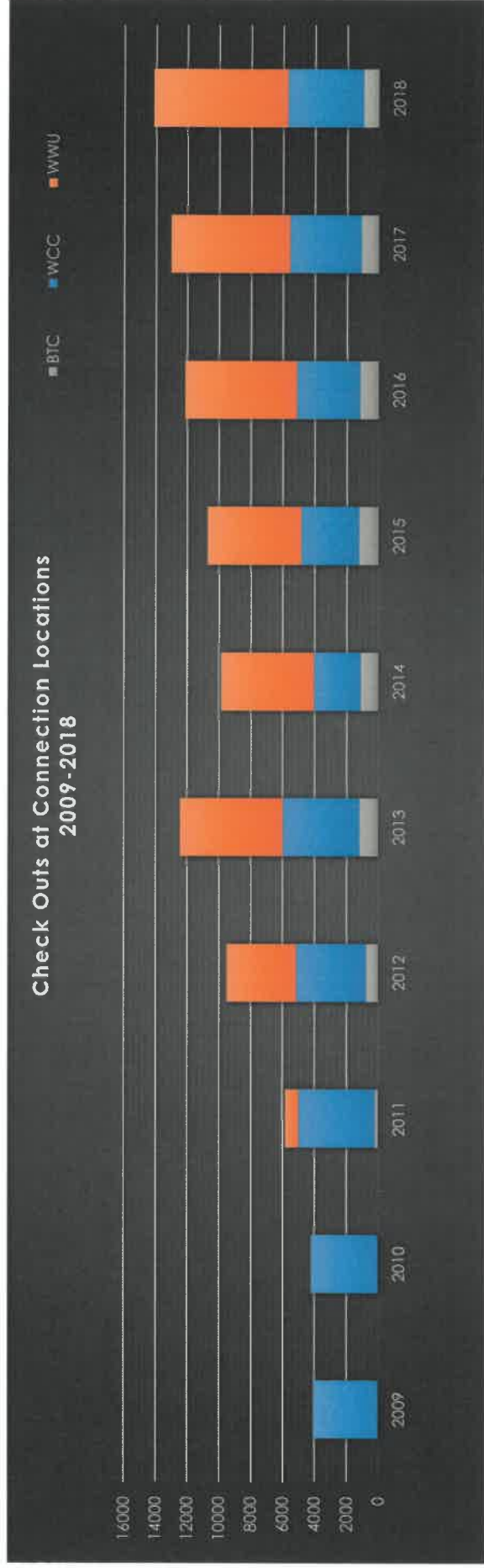


- Print is still a staple in our community
- Video is our second best-circulating material, although our collection is not increasing in size

## Where have patrons been checking out materials?

- Ten years ago, close to 90% of checkout activity happened at Central
- Now 15% of our checkout activity is at our branches/connections, and a further 13% happens electronically
- At Central 20-25% of checkouts are items on hold, at branches 40-50% of checkouts are holds

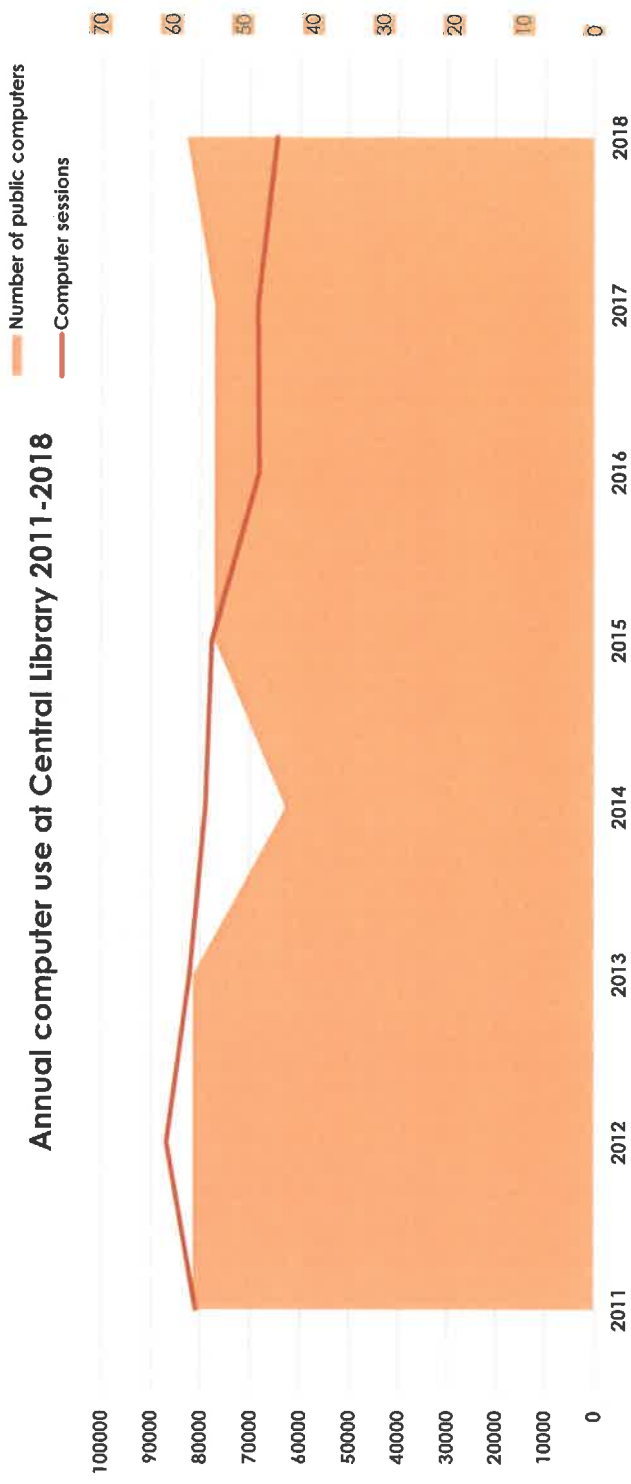




- Having alternate holds pick up locations out in the community is a popular service
- Could impact the number of visitors in our physical libraries as more patrons take advantage of this convenience service

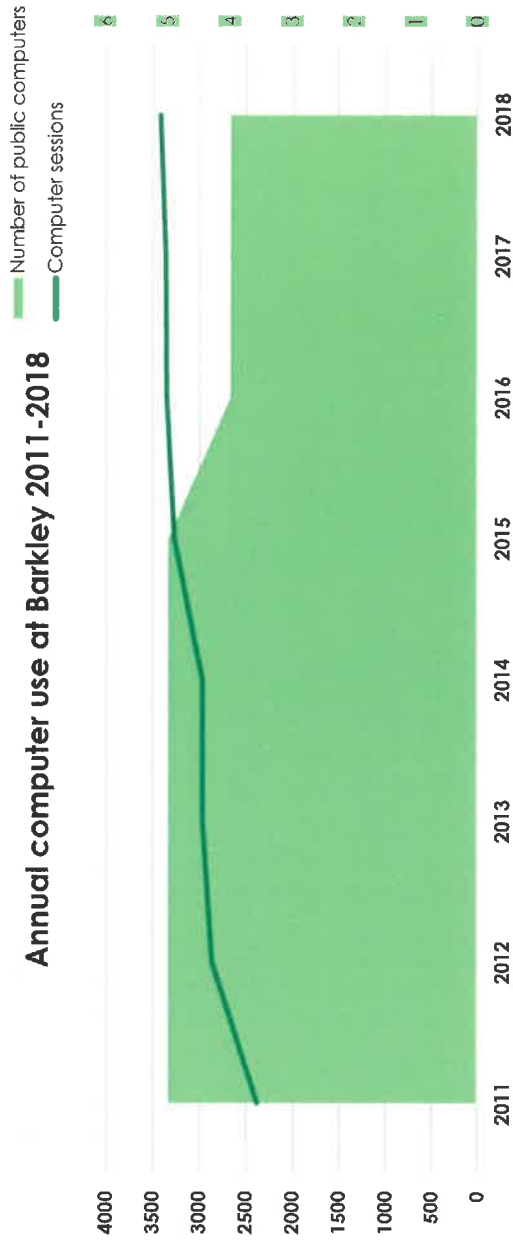
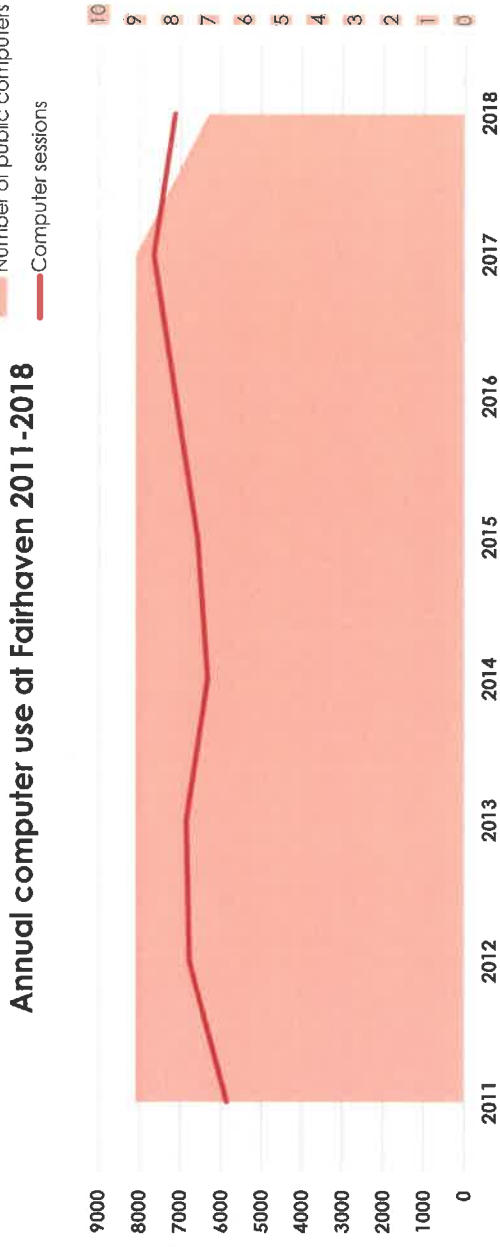
## Where have they been using public computers?

- The number of public computers available at Central have increased over time, but the overall number of sessions continue to decline



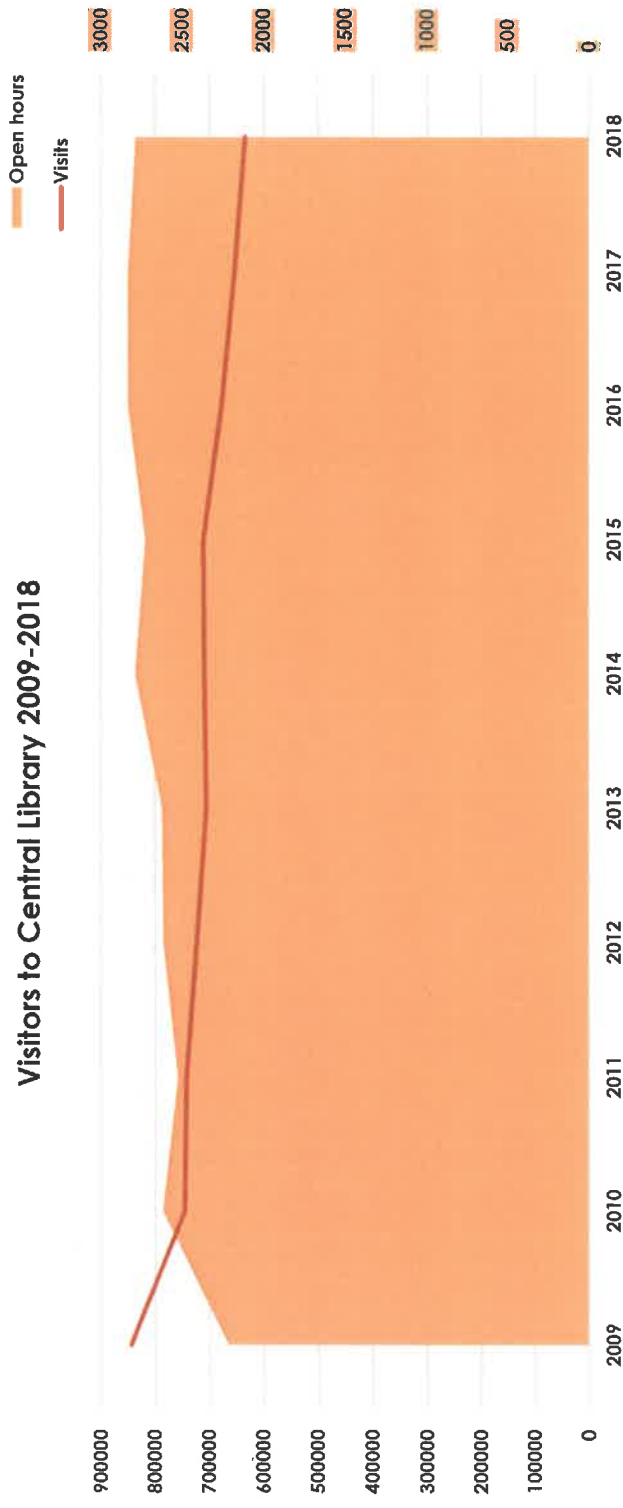
## Computers at Branches?

- Branch computer use has held steady or increased relative to the number of computers available



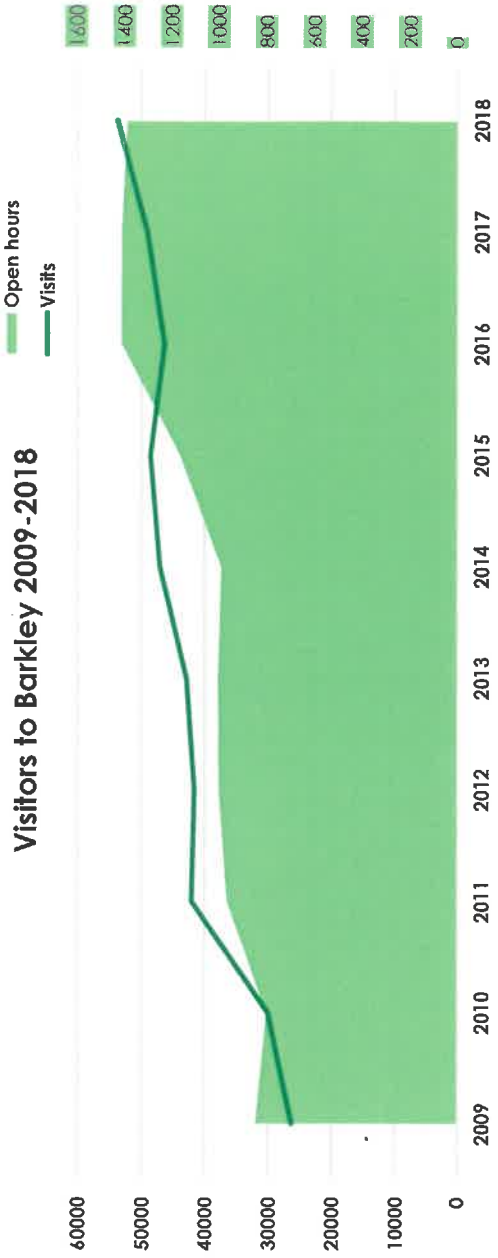
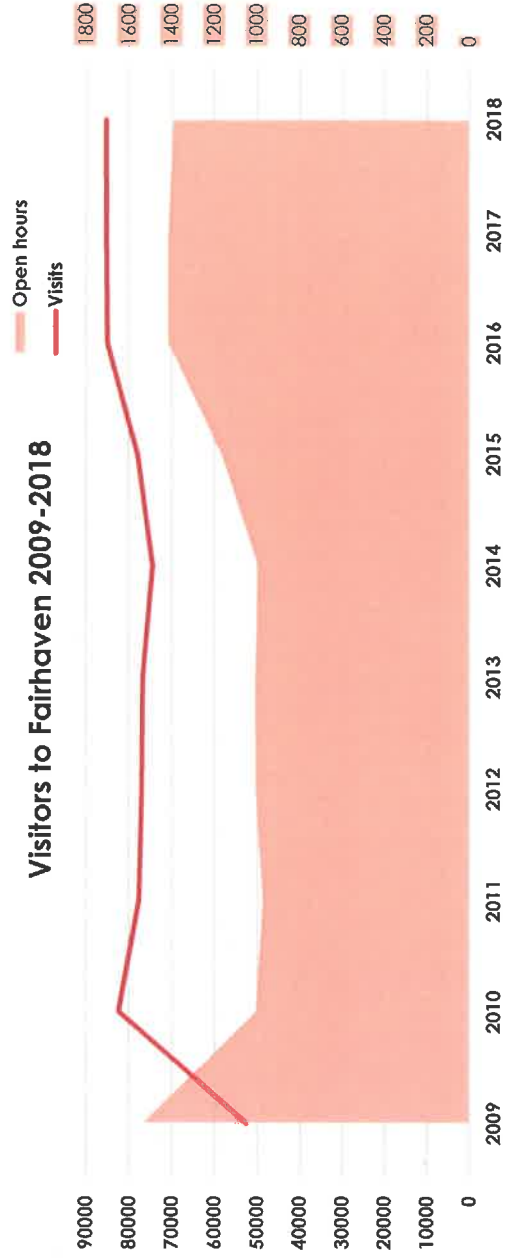
## Where have the people been?

- We've seen modest increases to open hours at the Central library over time; such as returning Sunday hours
- Foot traffic continues to gradually decline – but this doesn't necessarily signal a lack of interest from the public.



## We know where some of the people are....

- Branch traffic is holding steady or increasing



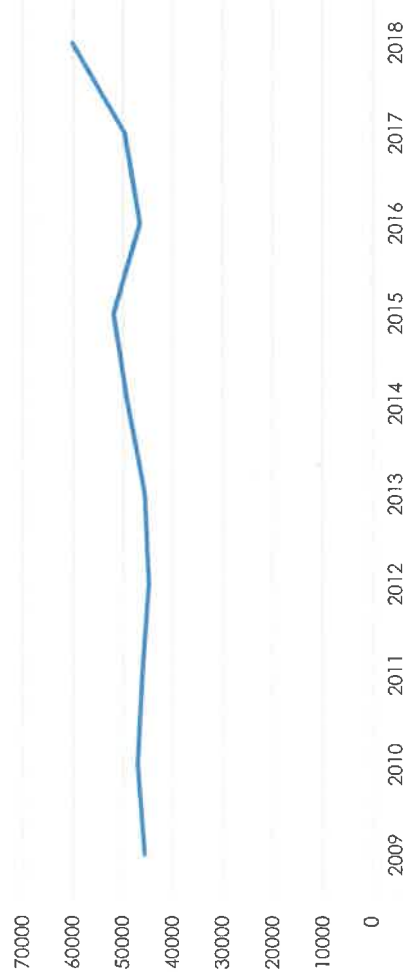


**New borrowers registered 2009-2018**



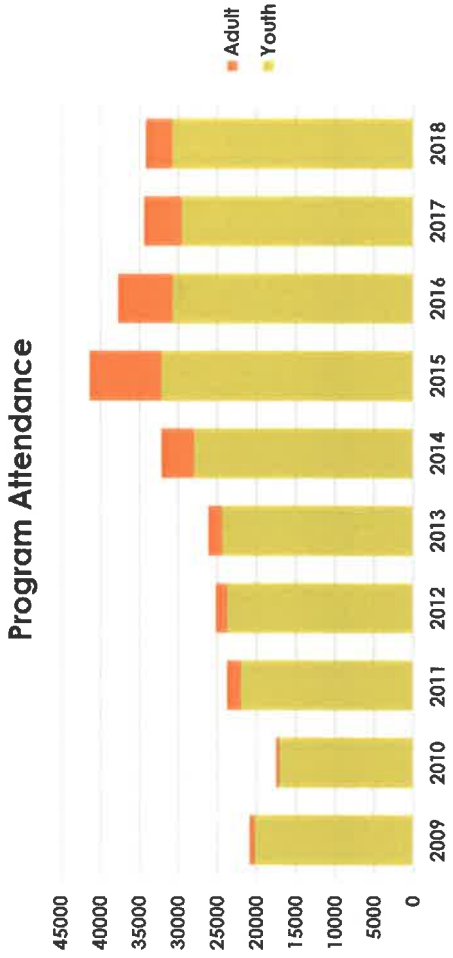
- We are registering fewer new borrowers - this may be partly due to registrations being done with the proper system card (WCLS/BPL)

**Active borrowers 2009-2018**



- However, the number of borrowers that are active from year-to-year appears to be rising.

# Programs



# Programs Offered

